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GREAT IRIQUOIS FIRE IS REPRODUCED IN MINIATURE

One Hundred and Thirty Lives are Lost in an Opera House Fire at Boyertown, Pennsylvania When a Tank Lets Go, Followed by the Overturning of Lamps.

Small Opera House was Crowded With Sunday School Pupils Attending a Church Benefit—In Some Instances, Whole Families were Wiped Out—Mad Rush Follows the Appearance of Fire and Many were Trampled Down—Scenes Following the Fire Beggared Description—Friends are Almost Frantic With Grief.

BULLETIN.

Boyertown, Pa., Jan. 14.—An official statement given to the United Press, this afternoon, by Burgess Kohler, of Boyertown, places the number of dead at one hundred and thirty, seriously injured at upwards of one hundred, a score of whom are probably fatally hurt.

Boyertown, Pa., Jan. 14.—Nearly one hundred persons were burned to death here last night in a fire which completely destroyed Rhoads' opera house. Sixty are injured, many fatally. They are members of the best families in the town.

The opera house was crowded with the members of St. John's Lutheran Sunday school, who were attending a benefit given for that church. While the show was in progress an oil tank exploded. The actors endeavored to quiet the audience, but in their anxiety to make themselves heard and to avoid the awful stampede of the women and children, the coal oil lamps, which were used at the footlights, were overturned, setting the place on fire. The flames, fed by the oil, shot almost to the ceiling and there was a wild rush of the seven hundred persons to escape from the burning building.

Scores of women and children were trampled upon and several who escaped being burned to death died after being dragged from the opera house.

In many cases, it is said, entire families have been wiped out. The scene which followed the explosion is indescribable. Scores of persons who were in the balcony at the time the explosion occurred jumped from the windows and sustained fractured limbs and skulls.

To add to the terrible disaster the fire apparatus became disabled and the structure was left entirely to the mercy of the seething flames. It is almost certain not a vestige of the bodies of the unfortunates, who were overcome by the smoke and perished, will ever be found. Assistance was asked from Pottstown, but before the fire apparatus from that city reached this place the entire center of the structure was a roaring furnace.

Had the women and children heeded the warning of the cooler heads in the audience, the horrible loss of life might have been averted, but there was the usual panic and stampede which invariably follows such a catastrophe. The flames spread rapidly, and communicated to the other parts of the theater. Men, women and children rushed for the many exits and the weaker sex and the children were trampled and maimed in the mad rush to gain the street.

Every home within a radius of half a dozen blocks of the opera house was made a temporary hospital, where the wounded were nursed by carriages and other means of conveyance.

Boyertown is a borough with a population of about 2500, and is located about midway between Pottstown and Reading. Hundreds of persons surround the burning structure, apparently unconscious of the pending danger from falling walls. Many parents who had children in the opera house are pacing to and fro, almost maddened by the awful sight.

The night was one of walking and anguish. The shrieks of mothers, who rushed to the scene as soon as they learned of the fire, was pitiful. As the night wore on, the crowds surrounding the building grew to such proportions that it was almost impossible for the police force, which had been augmented by a score of men from Pottstown and Reading to keep the people back. One woman, who said she had lost her entire family in

the theater, was with difficulty restrained from throwing herself into the roaring flames.

At 1 o'clock a special train from Reading bearing physicians and nurses reached here, but there was little for them to do, as the injured who had dashed themselves to the pavement had been cared for by the physicians, assisted by the Pottstown relief corps.

A few minutes after midnight, the rear wall of the theater collapsed. The flames broke out anew and those who had vainly hoped to be able to find the remains of some of their loved ones turned in despair from the scene of the awful catastrophe.

It is estimated that at least 75 persons were injured by being trampled upon either on the stairway or by jumping from the windows of the burning structure. Of this number, at least a score were fatally injured; at least a half dozen succumbed to their injuries after being hurried to one of the temporary hospitals.

Three children, ranging in ages from 8 to 12 years, and one woman who were dragged from the building by persons who had rushed to the rescue, were trampled almost to death. The skull of one of the unfortunate children was crushed as though an egg shell.

The fire was under control shortly before 1 o'clock, but it was absolutely impossible to attempt to make a search of the ruins last night. It is extremely doubtful if the remains of the victims can be distinguished from the debris, as many persons in the audience were covered with burning oil as the lamps exploded.

Boyertown, Pa., Jan. 14.—An exploration of the steaming ruins of Rhoads' Opera House, shortly before noon today and a poll of the houses in the little parish of St. John's Lutheran church, indicates that the list of dead, resulting from the fire and panic, last night, which terminated an amateur production, given under the auspices of the church, will approximate one hundred and fifty. Seventy-five bodies have already been identified, according to the coroner, and reports from temporary hospitals indicate that several fatalities may result among the seventy-five persons seriously injured. There is scarcely a home in this place, today, but is saddened by the death of one or more relatives or friends.

Of the five hundred persons in the little opera house when the fire broke out today, scarcely one hundred escaped death or injury.

Rescue parties, searching the ruins today, are greeted with appalling sights. Many of the bodies of the victims were entirely consumed by the flames only charred pieces of bone remain. Others, which were protected from the flames by being buried under piles of dead bodies, have been taken out today unscathed but horribly mutilated. Disembodied hands and fingers have been found which were literally trampled off. A shocking number of children were among the victims and a number of these tiny forms, brought out today, were literally crushed to a pulp, showing that the little ones had been ruthlessly trampled down in the frenzied rush to safety.

The entire disaster was due, primarily, to a panic and stampede. The first explosion, which resulted from a escape of gas used in the moving picture machine, was inconsequential in itself. The flash of the explosion, however, terrified the children and in the packed hall and they started a mad rush for the doors. Those on the stage became frightened and the kerosene lamps, used for footlights, were kicked over and the place flooded. Almost in a twinkling the narrow exit was clogged with a wall of

human forms and the open stage door and open windows in the hall served to send a draught through the fire trap and the flames swept over the entire house as if by magic leaping about the imprisoned wretched who were caught without a chance of escape.

Among the charred corpses today was found one body of a woman with a child hugged close to her breast, the two being burned into one cinder. Other bodies were found with hands clasped and in the attitude of prayer.

In the list of identified dead today is the name of Mrs. Stella Mayes, who had coached the young church folks in the play being given. Mrs. Mayes was on the stage and gave her life in an effort to save the young people under her charge.

The startling charge, that cowardice on the part of some of the few men in the audience was chiefly responsible for the great loss of life, is made today by Reuben W. Sewer, one of the men who escaped by dropping from a window of the opera house.

HUGHES IS WILLIN'

New York's Governor Decides to Get Into the Race in Earnest

Albany, N. Y., Jan. 14.—Governor Hughes is willing. That he likes his presidential boom became apparent today. He talked with Harry W. Mack, of New York, who will call up the Hughes presidential resolution in New York county Republican committee, Thursday night, and admitted that he has agreed to meet Senator Crane of Massachusetts, in New York, the latter part of the week.

It is a war on Taft and Roosevelt from now on and in the open. Senator Crane it is said represents the anti-Taft interests.

AUSTIN AND EMERSON

Found Guilty of Falsifying the Court Records.

Columbus, Jan. 14.—Ex-Senate Senator L. L. H. Austin, of Toledo,

and Ex-Supreme Court Clerk Lawson Emerson, of St. Clairsville, were found guilty in the supreme court Tuesday of contempt of court for altering the records of that court in an endeavor to make it appear that Austin had passed the state law examination and had been admitted to the bar. Emerson gave him fraudulent certificates.

Austin was fined \$100 and given ten days in the Franklin county jail and Emerson was sentenced to ten days in jail, without fine.

WANTS TO TAKE IN THE ISLE OF PINES

Washington, Jan. 14.—Senator Dick has introduced a joint resolution placing the government of the Isle of Pines in the control of the United States until otherwise provided by act of congress or through treaty with Cuba.

The president is given direction of the military, civil and judicial affairs of the island.

TRIAL IS BEGUN

Man Suspected of Brutal Murder Before the Court Again.

Millersburg, O., Jan. 14.—The second trial of Ben Dickerson, of Coshocton, charged with the murder of Mrs. Kate Hughes, two years ago, began here Tuesday.

Mrs. Hughes was assaulted as she went to a spring for water. Death was caused by forcing her head between two saplings. Judge Wickam held Tuesday that Dickerson must answer to all three counts of the indictment.

Dickerson was convicted on the first trial but the supreme court granted a new trial on the ground that the evidence of bloodhounds, which figured in the case, was not competent.

CULBERTSON CHARGES GROSS FAVORITISM

Washington, Jan. 14.—The Democratic demand for a senatorial investigation of Secretary Cortelyou's administration of the treasury department, becomes more pressing today when Culbertson, (Texas) minority leader, charged "gross favoritism" in the recent award of Panama bonds.

FOURTEEN SKATERS IN PARIS ARE DROWNED

Paris, Jan. 14.—Fourteen persons broke through the ice today while skating in Bois De Boulogne park and were drowned.

In Kamchatka there grows a mushroom called the false orange, from which is made liquor that produces delirium and convulsions. Nevertheless, it is a favorite beverage.

Rev. Thomas Spurgeon, the famous English clergyman is now in Venice, but is so much better that he will probably within the next year entirely regain his health.

TAFT-FORAKER SQUABBLE IS SURE TO REACH THE COURTS

The Row in Cleveland is Far From Being Settled and the Fight Goes Merrily on--Contestants Refuse to be Governed by Secretary Thompson's Ruling.

Chairman Brown Takes a Hand in the Fight and Gives Assurance to the Taft Leaders That Their Delegation Will be Seated in Convention--Burton and His Political Leadership and Future are Brought into the Muddle--Meeting Held in Columbus Today Promises to be a Warm One With Some Rather Sensational Disclosures.

Columbus, O., Jan. 14.—Walter Brown, chairman of the Republican state central committee, has stepped forward in an attempt to smooth out the factional fight among Cuyahoga Republicans. Last night Brown made overtures to the leaders of the Taft forces in Cleveland on the basis that the call for the primaries in Cuyahoga be revised to include the selection of a new county central committee along with delegates to the state convention.

No decision has been reached by Secretary Rodway, John H. Price, or the old committee, Maurice Maschke, F. L. Taft and James H. Cassidy, all of whom participated in a midnight conference with the state chairman at Taft headquarters. The overtures for a settlement came from the leaders of the Old-Foraker forces in Cleveland.

The Foraker following is prepared to deny that Secretary of State Thompson has any jurisdiction in the Cuyahoga quarrel at the hearing to be held before the secretary by the contesting factions. The threat is openly made that if the secretary rules that the Cuyahoga board of elections must recognize the call issued by the old committee, the entire matter will be taken into the courts.

A refusal on the part of the Cuyahoga supervisors to obey the ruling of the secretary of state, may lead to the ousting of the election board members. Whatever the decision of Secretary Thompson today, the indications are that the controversy will reach the courts.

W. R. Hopkins, member of the Cuyahoga election board, around whom much of the fight in Cleveland is centering, called on the secretary of state Monday afternoon, and will be present at the hearing today.

In the opinion of Hopkins, Secretary Thompson has absolutely no authority to make a choice between the contesting committees as certified to the Cuyahoga election supervisors. He says the contention that the secretary has final decision in the matter would not stand in the courts five minutes.

There is evident a plan already ascribed to the senatorial following

the old committee would be recognized by the state convention. "If it comes to the point where you have to make a rough and tumble fight, why, fight it out, pick a delegation, and we will see that it is seated in the convention," said Brown.

One proposition submitted to the Cleveland politicians was that committee men from each precinct be selected at the coming primaries, the precinct committee to name the central or governing committee. This proposition met with a flat refusal on the part of the Taft leaders.

Senators Foraker and Dick will return from Washington this week, open headquarters in this city and make the fight on Secretary Taft as vigorous as possible. This announcement was made last night by Charles L. Kurtz, the acknowledged Foraker leader in Ohio. Every means that the two senators can command is to be exerted in an attempt to break the Taft ranks and make impossible a solid national convention delegation from Ohio.

It has become evident to the Taft managers that organization politics in Cuyahoga has more to do with the present fight in that county than the question of a presidential endorsement. Word was brought to Columbus today that part of the trouble in Cleveland is actuated by a desire of the enemies of Congressman Burton to put him in a hole if possible and open the way for a fight against him as Republican leader in Cleveland as well as for re-nomination to congress.

FORAKER IS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

The Washington Post Takes a Poll of the House and Bases a Prediction on the Result--Its Figures Fail to Give the Gallant Joe a Single Vote in the Coming National Convention.

Washington, Jan. 14.—According to a poll of the house of representatives completed by the Washington Post today nearly one-half of the Republican membership now prefers the nomination of Secretary Taft for the presidency. There are for Taft, ninety-three members; for Cannon, thirty-nine; for Knox, twenty-six; for Fairbanks, thirteen; for Hughes, eight;

for Lafollette, five and for Foraker, one. Fifteen members were non-committal and twenty absent.

On this basis, not counting the delegates from southern states which sent no Republican members to congress, the Post figures that the first ballot in convention would result in Taft getting 390 votes; Cannon 148; Hughes, 8; Knox 68; Lafollette, 26, and Fairbanks 34.

REAL FIGHT WILL BE OVER EVELYN'S STORY

Battle of Experts was Begun in Court This Morning When Three Physicians Testified to Insanity in Thaw's Family--A Wooster Tutor Tells of Thaw's Conduct While in School.

New York, Jan. 14.—The battle of experts for the life of Harry Thaw began in earnest this morning when Attorney Littleton called to the stand, three physicians who knew about his maternal and paternal ancestors. They also called Charles E. Koehler of Wyonona, Minn., who as a tutor in the Thaw family, had Thaw under observation when he was sixteen.

An early adjournment of the morning session was taken by Justice Dowling at the request of Attorney Littleton who explained that an important witness had not yet arrived.

Dr. Deemar, a physician, of Kittanning, Pa., told about Thaw's early attack of St. Vitus' dance and about insanity in the family of Thaw's mother.

Dr. Wm. Butler, of Roanoke, Va., and Dr. Foster of Norfolk, Va., told of insanity in Thaw's ancestors.

Mr. Koehler said that when Thaw

was at Wooster, he was anaemic and nervous and at all times was an eccentric student. He was an exceptionally moody youth, given to fits of extreme exaltation or extreme gloom.

The real fight will come over the introduction of Evelyn Thaw's story of her betrayal at the hands of Stanford White. Jerome has made up his mind that this story shall not be repeated and so soon as she is sworn he will enter an objection to her testifying to anything excepting actual occurrences on the night of the tragedy and immediately prior thereto. Littleton will insist that her story is material.

HERO OF COLD HARBOR DIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

Worcester, Mass., Jan. 14.—Brigadier General Josiah Pickett, one of the heroes of Cold Harbor, died here today. He was desperately wounded in that engagement.

